

C L A I M A M E N D M E N T S

The following is a complete listing of all claims ever presented in the present application, including the text of all pending claims and withdrawn claims.

Claims **1-66** are pending.

Claims **1, 50, 54, and 59-66** are independent.

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for providing a reward to a bidder participating in an auction, the method comprising:

identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;
receiving a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;
determining, based on a reward rule, whether the bidder is qualified to receive a reward other than the product, and if the bidder is qualified:

transmitting, across a computer network to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining, based on the bid, whether the bidder is qualified to receive the product; and if the bidder is qualified:

transmitting to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is qualified to receive the product.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 2, wherein the step of determining, based on the bid, whether the bidder is qualified to receive the product, further comprises:

determining whether the bid is greater than each of a plurality of remaining bids.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the reward comprises at least one of:

a value of currency, a supplement to the bid, a rebate on the product, an amount of frequent flier miles, a second product, and a warranty for the product.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the reward rule comprises a condition that the bidder accept an offer provided by a third party.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 5, further comprising:
transmitting, before the determining step, an offer to the bidder for a second product provided by the third party;

receiving an acceptance of the offer from the bidder; whereby the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 6, wherein the second product is a service.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 7, wherein the service is a credit card account and wherein the third party is a credit card provider.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 6, wherein the reward is a supplement to the bid, the supplement including a value of currency.
10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 5, further comprising:
determining whether the bidder has an acceptable credit history before the offer is transmitted to the bidder.
11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving at least one bid for the product from each of a plurality of remaining bidders.
12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 11, wherein the step of receiving at least one bid is performed prior to the step of receiving the bid.
13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 12, wherein the reward includes a condition that the bid from the bidder is greater than each bid received from the plurality of remaining bidders.
14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 12, further comprising:
determining which of the at least one bids is a greatest bid.
15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 14, wherein the reward rule comprises a condition that the bid from the bidder is greater than the greatest bid by a predetermined percentage.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 14, wherein the reward rule comprises a condition that the bid from the bidder is greater than the greatest bid by a predetermined currency value.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the reward rule comprises a condition that the bid is a first received bid.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 17, wherein the reward is a currency value corresponding to a value of the bid.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 17, wherein the reward corresponds to a difference between the bid and a greatest bid.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, in which the establishing step comprises:

establishing the reward rule to include a condition that a greatest bid is at least equal to a predetermined value; and the method further comprising:

receiving a second bid for the product from a second bidder, wherein the second bid is the greatest bid; and

determining whether the greatest bid is at least equal to the predetermined value, whereby if the greatest bid is at least equal to the predetermined value, the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 20, wherein the step of determining, based on the reward rule further comprises:

determining, based on the reward rule, whether the second bidder is qualified to receive a reward; and if the second bidder is qualified:

transmitting, to the second bidder, an indication that the second bidder is qualified to receive the reward, whereby if the greatest bid is at least equal to the predetermined value, the second bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, in which the establishing step further comprises:

establishing the reward rule including a condition that the bid exceed a prior bid, the method further comprising:

receiving a prior bid, wherein the determining step further comprises:

determining whether the bid is greater than the prior bid; whereby if the bid is greater than the prior bid, the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 22, wherein the reward rule further includes a condition that the bid exceed a prior bid by a predetermined value; and

wherein the step of determining whether the bid is greater than the prior bid further comprises:

determining whether the bid is greater than the prior bid by a predetermined value, whereby if the bid is greater than the prior bid by the predetermined value, the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 22, wherein the prior bid is received from the bidder.
25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 22, wherein the prior bid is received from a second bidder.
26. The method of claim 25, wherein the bid is equal to the prior bid, and wherein the bid and the prior bid are a highest bid.
27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 26, further comprising: comparing a participation history of the bidder and the second bidder; and awarding the product based on the comparison.
28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising: establishing the reward rule including a condition that the bidder submit a progressive bid that is greater by at least a predetermined value than a prior bid; receiving the prior bid from the bidder; and wherein the determining step further comprises:
determining whether the bid is greater than the prior bid by at least the predetermined value; whereby if the bid is greater than the prior bid by at least the predetermined value, the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.
29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 28, wherein the predetermined value corresponds to a percentage of the prior bid.

30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, in which the establishing step further comprises:

establishing the reward rule including a condition that the bidder submits a predetermined number of bids, the method further comprising:

receiving at least one prior bid from the bidder; and wherein the determining step further comprises:

determining whether a number of bids from the bidder, including the bid and the at least one prior bid, is at least equal to the predetermined number of bids, whereby if the number of bids is at least equal to the predetermined number of bids, the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, in which the establishing step further comprises:

establishing the reward rule including a condition that a bidder submit at least two bids within a predetermined amount of time; the method further comprising:

receiving a second bid from the bidder; and wherein the determining step further comprises:

determining whether the bid and the second bid were received within the predetermined amount of time.

32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
measuring a time between the bid and a previous bid from a second bidder;
and in which the establishing step further comprises:

establishing the reward rule including a condition that the bidder is qualified
to receive the reward when the time is greater than a predetermined value; and
wherein the determining step further comprises:

determining whether the time between the bid and the previous bid is
greater than the predetermined value.

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
measuring a time between the bid and a previous bid from a second bidder;
and in which the establishing step further comprises:

establishing the reward rule including a condition that the bidder is qualified
to receive the reward when the time is greater than a predetermined value; and
wherein the determining step further comprises:

determining whether the time between the bid and the previous bid is
less than the predetermined value.

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, in which the
establishing step further comprises:

establishing a reward rule that a historic participation of the bidder meets a
predefined criterion; and wherein the determining step further comprises:

measuring the historic participation of the bidder; and
determining whether the historic participation meets the
predefined criterion.

35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 34, wherein the predefined criterion includes a requirement that the bidder has participated in at least one previous auction session.
36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 34, wherein the historic participation corresponds to at least one of: a number of previous auctions in which the bidder participated, a number of previous auctions which the bidder won, and an amount of profit earned from the bidder.
37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving personal data from the bidder including at least one of a name, an address and a financial account identifier belonging to the bidder.
38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 37, further comprising:
verifying the personal data with a third party.
39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving step includes:
receiving the bid from the bidder over one of a telecommunications network and the Internet.
40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the product is a service.
41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing the reward to the bidder.

42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving, from the bidder, a payment to close the auction session.

43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 42, wherein the
payment is determined from a parallel auction.

44. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving, from the bidder, a payment to extend the auction session.

45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 44, wherein the
payment is determined from a parallel auction.

46. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
terminating the reward if a higher bid is received from a second bidder.

47. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the reward
rule includes a condition that the reward be issued randomly.

48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the reward
to be offered is determined based on at least one of:

the bidder's participation history, the bid spread, the product, a statistical
likelihood that the bid will be a greatest bid, and the average highest bid
historically submitted for a similar product.

49. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)The method of claim 1, wherein the
receiving step includes:

receiving an encrypted indication of a time the bid was transmitted.

50. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for providing a penalty to a bidder participating in an auction, the method comprising:

- identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;
- receiving, across a computer network, a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;
- determining before the auction closes, based on a penalty rule, whether the bidder is to receive a penalty; and if the bidder is to receive the penalty:
 - transmitting, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is to receive the penalty.

51. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 50, wherein the penalty rule comprises a condition that the bid is less than a current high bid.

52. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 50, wherein the penalty comprises making the bidder ineligible to continue participating in the auction session.

53. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 50, wherein the penalty rule comprises a condition that the bid is less than a predetermined value.

54. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for participating in an auction session, comprising:

- receiving an identification of a product subject to bidding during an auction session;
- transmitting, across a computer network, a bid for the product to an auctioneer during the auction session; and
- receiving a reward other than the product in response to the bid.

55. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 54, further comprising:
receiving the product in response to the bid.
56. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 54, wherein the
product is a service.
57. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 54, wherein the
transmitting step is conducted over one of a telecommunications network and the
Internet.
58. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 54, wherein the
transmitting step includes:
transmitting the bid with an encrypted indication of a time the bid was
transmitted.
59. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for participating in an auction
session, comprising:
receiving an identification of a product subject to bidding during an auction
session;
transmitting a bid for the product to an auctioneer during the auction
session; and
receiving, ~~across a computer network~~ before the auction session closes, a
penalty in response to the bid.

60. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer data signal embodied in a computer-readable carrier wave comprising a segment having computer processing instructions for notifying a bidder that the bidder is qualified to receive a reward other than the product in response to a previous bid submitted during an auction session.

61. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An apparatus for providing a reward to a bidder participating in an auction, comprising:

means for identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;

means for receiving a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;

means for determining, based on a reward rule, whether the bidder is qualified to receive a reward other than the product, and

means for transmitting, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

62. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)An apparatus for providing a reward to a bidder participating in an auction, comprising:

- a storage device; and

- a processor connected to the storage device,

- the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and

- the processor operative with the program to:

 - identify a product subject to bidding during an auction session;

 - receive a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;

 - determine, based on a reward rule, whether the bidder is qualified to receive a reward other than the product, and if the bidder is qualified:

 - transmit, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

63. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for providing a reward to a bidder participating in an auction, the method comprising:

- identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;

- receiving a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;

- determining, based on a reward rule, whether the bidder is qualified to receive a reward other than the product, and if the bidder is qualified:

 - transmitting, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is qualified to receive the reward.

64. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An apparatus for providing a penalty to a bidder participating in an auction, comprising:

means for identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;

means for receiving a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;

means for determining before the auction closes, based on a penalty rule, whether the bidder is to receive a penalty; and

means for transmitting, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is to receive the penalty.

65. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An apparatus for providing a penalty to a bidder participating in an auction, comprising:

a storage device; and

a processor connected to the storage device,

the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and

the processor operative with the program to:

identify a product subject to bidding during an auction session;

receive a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;

determine before the auction closes, based on a penalty rule, whether the bidder is to receive a penalty; and if the bidder is to receive the penalty:

transmit, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is to receive the penalty.

66. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for providing a penalty to a bidder participating in an auction, the method comprising:

- identifying a product subject to bidding during an auction session;
- receiving a bid for the product from a bidder during the auction session;
- determining before the auction closes, based on a penalty rule, whether the bidder is to receive a penalty; and if the bidder is to receive the penalty:
 - transmitting, to the bidder, an indication that the bidder is to receive the penalty.